

# WELFARE-TO-WORK

## HANDBOOK

### **E. TRAINING**

Moving from welfare to work will present major challenges for welfare recipients as well as the gaining activities. Although DoD has committed to supporting the program, identifying jobs and recruiting applicants will not by themselves produce success. Therefore, activities must help participants adapt to the workplace environment by providing workplace as well as skills training, and take steps to help them address the constraints that have kept them unemployed in the past. In recognition of the self-funding nature of Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities (NAFIs), NAFI managers are encouraged to provide training in accordance with this section consistent with resource availability.

Most of the anticipated vacancies for use by welfare recipients will become available individually. Seldom will a group be hired simultaneously. For this reason, DoD encourages Components and activities to use available orientation programs and a “train the trainer” process, adapt successful mentoring programs, and emphasize occupational training through an on-the-job approach. In large metropolitan areas, and particularly in nonappropriated fund positions, however, it may be possible to provide some orientation and workplace training in groups. To the extent that this approach can be used, it should be used to create an atmosphere of peer support.

#### **1. Workplace Readiness and Training**

##### **a. Pre-employment Services**

- **State and Local Help.** State and local employment and welfare agencies provide a variety of services for their referral candidates. Activities can generally anticipate the following from referral candidates:
  - Welfare referrals will have had some level of employability and skills assessment. Federal agencies should ensure that they identify any basic or occupational skill requirements so that the initial “match” and referral has a higher potential for success.
  - Before coming to a potential employment site, individuals participating in government-sponsored work activities will sign an agreement that outlines

their responsibilities in the work activity, the benefits and supportive services associated with the work activity, and the penalties for violating the agreement. This ensures that individuals referred for work activity, whether paid employment or work experience, will arrive on the job with a basic understanding of their obligations and responsibilities as work participants.

- Most individuals will have had some level of instruction or assistance in job search and job retention, but may not have had much participation in full-time work. For those individuals with little experience in the work setting, management and peer support on the job will be critical to success.
- Case managers will make follow-up contacts with the hiring agency and the individual participants. These contacts will not be intrusive, and are intended to identify and prevent potential adjustment and performance problems.
- **Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).** The JTPA supports job training services to economically disadvantaged individuals. Although the States play a key intermediary role in JTPA, most of the action takes place at the local level in Service Delivery Areas (SDAs). (Appendices 13 and 14 list the State JTPA Liaisons and SDA Directors.) SDAs have Private Industry Councils composed of representatives of the public, private, and non-profit sectors that operate similar to a board of directors. The SDAs recruit, assess, train, and place workers (some of whom are welfare recipients) into jobs. Employers also benefit from these services. Personnel at the SDAs work directly with employers to find the right person for the job. They also deliver a wide range of services to program participants. Among these are:
  - Occupational training;
  - On-the-job training;
  - Basic education;
  - Job and career counseling; and
  - Coordination for supportive services.

#### **b. Program Frameworks**

Each Component may develop its own framework for orienting and training welfare recipients. This section discusses three frameworks already in existence for a range of new employees.

- The Department of the Navy plan is based on a three-pronged approach: (1) a four-week orientation program focusing on developing workplace skills; (2) structured on-the-job technical training; and (3) mentoring. The orientation program consists of three levels of training: basic (reading, writing, and

computation); intermediate (listening, speaking, personal management, career development skills); and high (interpersonal skills, managing diversity, teamwork). Upon being assigned to a job, employees are enrolled in a competency-based training and certification program of structured on-the-job training that is augmented by classroom training as needed. A copy of the framework is available via the CPMS web site (<http://www.cpms.osd.mil>).

- The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has outlined a three-phase program of orientation and training. Phase one is a program of orientation lasting six to nine months under the guidance of a human resource officer. This phase allows an employee time to assimilate into the workforce and resolve any transportation or personal issues that affect the ability to hold a full-time job. This phase involves extensive interaction and counseling. It includes six weeks of classes on improving personal skills (basic communication, conflict resolution, professional image building, office skills). Successful completion will allow employees to progress from grade 1 to grade 2 and be assigned to a DFAS organization.

Phase two involves an initial work experience of twelve to fourteen months. The employee is assigned a mentor. In addition, with the assistance of his or her supervisor, the employee establishes an individual development plan (IDP). Upon completion of IDP requirements and successful performance, the employee will be recommended for promotion to grade 3. (To be promoted to GS-3, employees must meet the basic qualification requirements for the position.)

Phase three involves assignment as a grade 3 office automation clerk or accounting clerk. After the employee works a minimum of twelve months at grade 3, the employee may “graduate” from the program and be permanently assigned to the organization.

More detailed information can be obtained from Stephanie Olson, Chief of Staffing, at 703-607-5127, or, Lutricia Jackson, Director, Career Management and Training, at 703-607-1184.

- Since 1990, Marriott International’s Community Employment and Training Department has operated a program of pre-employment training for welfare recipients known as “Pathways to Independence.” The program starts disadvantaged individuals on the road to full-time employment. Each program cycle lasts six weeks and typically trains 12 to 18 participants. The 180-hour training cycle includes 60 hours of classroom training and 120 hours of occupational skills training, including job shadowing and “hands-on” job practice. The curriculum is designed to help individuals overcome their barriers to employment before they are hired. During this period, participants are not considered employees of Marriott. Weekly evaluations by trainers

ensure awareness of progress and an opportunity to address issues and concerns.

Those interested in this program may read more about it in the April 1997 issue of *Training* magazine (pages 45-50).

**c. Orientation for Employees and Supervisors**

- Each Component or activity should modify its civilian orientation and training programs to incorporate certain features of the Department of Labor program for worker-trainees as well as supervisors. Basic orientation packages for the Welfare-to-Work Program should contain the following:
  - General orientation (including skills assessment, in-processing matters, and support services);
  - Basic workplace skills (such as office skills, time management, communication, working in teams, and computer literacy);
  - Transition skills (balancing personal and professional responsibilities); and
  - Basic military awareness (such as the relationships between military and civilian life, the basics of military customs and standards, and security and emergency procedures).
- Department of Labor has prepared a sample curriculum for orientation found on its web site at <http://www.doleta.gov/ohrw2w/volindex.htm#voll>.

**d. Skills Training.** Where readiness training addresses the *organizational* skills required to function in the Department, initial skills training focuses on the basic *occupational* skills required to perform tasks. This is the responsibility of the employing Component and of the supervisors at the worksite. Because nearly all of the positions will be at the entry level, the skills training will tend to be accomplished on the job.

**2. Workplace Support**

**a. Mentoring.** In the words of the Department of Labor, mentoring is a critical strategy for employees to learn new behaviors and new ways of relating to people. A mentor is someone, usually at a higher level in the organization, whose job is not directly affected by the employee and who is dedicated to helping employees in work and life skill issues. The Department of Labor has developed model lesson plans for employees and mentors, including one on meeting a mentor. These lesson plans can be found on the web at <http://www.doleta.gov/ohrw2w/volume3>. The individual plans

are found by adding the following to the previous address: /v3md05 (for employees), /v3md06 (for mentors), and /v3md07 (on meeting a mentor). These addresses must end with one of the following document types: htm, pdf, txt, or wpd.

There are additional resources for developing a mentor program within the Department of Defense:

- The Department of the Army has published guidance to facilitate mentoring, as well as a list of references relevant to the subject. The Army pamphlet, *Mentoring for Civilian Members of the Force*, can be obtained by contacting your component publications control office and requesting DA PAM 690-46.
- The Department of the Navy has developed a mentoring handbook and videotape under its civilian leadership development program. The twenty-eight page handbook provides information on building mentoring skills and questions and answers on the mentoring process for potential mentors and employees. It describes the roles and responsibilities of mentors and employees. A copy of the handbook is available via the CPMS web site (<http://www.cpms.osd.mil>).
- The Department of the Air Force is developing a mentoring program document which has not been published at this writing.

Additional information regarding mentoring is referenced in the bibliography at section I.

**b. Post-Employment Services.** DoD has long relied on the JTPA program to provide readjustment services (including orientation, assessment, and career counseling) for employees in surplus positions. Similar services are available for job applicants. Through the State employment offices, JTPA provides funding for direct training and training-related services such as work experience, vocation exploration, and some basic skills training before one begins work. JTPA also provides follow-up services such as counseling, transportation, health care, drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, individual and family counseling, dependent care, meals, and other reasonable expenses required for participation in the training program. These follow-up services typically terminate three months after employment begins.

Questions about these services should be directed to local State employment offices, which are listed in Appendix 4. These offices are also found on the Department of Labor web site at <http://www.doleta.gov/ohrw2w/recruit/where.htm>.

**c. Continuing Education.** Welfare-to-Work participants will receive the same consideration as other employees at the same grade level for available opportunities for continuing education and training.